

Message Text

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14

ACTION OPR-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SY-05 FBO-02 A-01 /021 W

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R 121627Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2288

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FOR HUNT, A/O, FROM O'BRIEN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC, ABLD, LE

SUBJECT: BEIRUT AMBASSADORIAL RESIDENCE

1. SUMMARY. DURING RECENT VISIT TO CHRISTIAN-CONTROLLED LEBANON, CHARGE AND RSO VISITED BEIRUT AMBASSADORIAL RESIDENCE AT YARZE. WITH EXCEPTION OF GLASS BREAKAGE, BUILDING WAS IN REMARKABLY GOOD CONDITION. END SUMMARY.

2. ON SUNDAY, NOV 7, CHARGE AND RSO VISITED YARZE RESIDENCE. OUR PARTY WAS MET BY SECURITY ASSISTANT FSL JOSEPH CHAHINE WHO CONDUCTED A TOUR OF COMPOUND. WITH EXCEPTION OF DAMAGE CAUSED BY ONE ARTILLERY SHELL REPORTED IN BEIRUT 6819, WHICH HAS BEEN PARTIALLY REPAIRED, BUILDING HAS SUFFERED NO STRUCTURAL DAMAGE. HOWEVER, MANY WINDOWS HAVE BEEN BROKEN OR CRACKED BY SMALL ARMS FIRE, CONCUSSION AND SHELL FRAGMENTS. MR. CHAHINE INFORMED US THAT HE HAS REPLACED APPROXIMATELY 57 ROOF TILES AS RESULT OF SHELL AND SMALL ARMS DAMAGE. IT WAS STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT ROOF ITSELF HAD BEEN DAMAGED, JUST OUTER TILES. IT WAS NOTED THAT A NUMBER OF WOODEN WINDOW SHUTTERS HAD ALSO BEEN DAMAGED; HOWEVER, IT APPEARED TO BE MINOR IN NATURE, E.G., SMALL BULLET HOLES.

3. ACCORDING TO MR. CHAHINE, THERE HAD BEEN NUMBER OF BRUSH FIRES ON GROUNDS CAUSED BY ARTILLERY FIRE,

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AND AS RESULT HE WAS FORCED TO CUT DOWN A NUMBER

OF THE TREES CLOSEST TO HOUSE, BUT NO OTHER SIGNIFICANT
DAMAGE WAS OBSERVED ON THE GROUNDS.

4. ON DAY OUR PARTY VISITED RESIDENCE, CITY
ELECTRICAL POWER WAS ON AND CITY WATER WAS AVAILABLE.
EMERGENCY GENERATOR IS NOT PRESENTLY OPERATIONAL,
AND MR. CHAHINE IS RELUCTANT TO HAVE IT REPAIRED AS
SUCH GENERATORS ARE AT A PREMIUM IN EASTERN SECTOR,
AND HE FEARS CONFISCATION IF THE AUTHORITIES
(MILITIA GROUPS) DISCOVER OUR GENERATOR. THERE
APPEARS TO BE NO MAJOR PROBLEM WITH THE UNIT, JUST
GENERAL SERVICING NEEDED.

5. WITH EXCEPTION OF GLASS REPLACEMENT, WHICH
WILL BE EXTENSIVE AND ALSO EXPENSIVE DUE TO
ANTICIPATED DEMAND FOR THIS COMMODITY, IF PEACE
COMES TO LEBANON THE RESIDENCE COULD BE REFURBISHED
WITHOUT TOO MUCH DIFFICULTY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT08429
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760424-0811
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761155/aaaabvos.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION OPR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <18 OCT 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BEIRUT AMBASSADORIAL RESIDENCE
TAGS: ASEC, ABLD, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006